



Idaho Governor's Council on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention



450 West State Street PO Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0036

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Shelli Rambo Roberson
208-334-5957

COMPELLING MULTI-MEDIA ART EXHIBIT SHOWS REALITIES OF TEEN PREGNANCY AND PARENTING

A compelling multi-media art exhibit opening in Boise this week offers parents an opportunity to open a dialogue about the difficult topic of teen pregnancy and parenting with their children.

The exhibit, titled *Children of Children, Portraits and Stories of Teenage Parents* by photographer Michael Nye, represents an intersection of art and a critical social issue. It features 50 black and white portraits of men and women ranging in age from 12 to 100 accompanied by audio stories where they tell how their lives have been crucially affected by teen pregnancy and parenting.

"This exhibit has a powerful and profound impact on people who see it, especially teens" said Shelli Rambo Roberson, Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Program Manager for the Department of Health & Welfare. "The honesty of the men and women in the portraits talking about the realities and challenges of teen pregnancy and parenting touch the heart, a place where statistics, facts, and lectures are rarely felt."

In addition to showing the concrete impact of teen pregnancy and parenting on people's lives, the exhibit offers parents an opportunity to discuss the issue with their children.

"Research shows that communication is critical to efforts to prevent teen pregnancy, but many parents find it very difficult to discuss the issue with their children," said First Lady, Patricia Kempthorne. "Taking children to see this exhibit offers parents a way to open a dialogue."

The exhibit runs October 12 through November 5 at the Boise State University Hemingway Center, located west of the Student Union Building. It will be open 9am until 9pm Monday through Friday and from noon until 5 on Saturday. The exhibit is sponsored by The Idaho Governor's Council on Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention and Central District Health. There is no charge for admission.

There is a comprehensive effort underway in Idaho to reduce teen pregnancy. In 2000, the birth rate for mothers age 15 to 17 in Idaho was 24.9 births per 1,000 women. Teen pregnancies have huge financial, social, and emotional costs. In 1999, Idaho spent \$2.2 million in Medicaid costs alone on teen births. Children of teenage mothers are more likely to have health and school problems, are at a greater risk of abuse and neglect, and are more likely to end up in prison.

Michael Nye is known as a photographer whose portraits reveal the intense and often poignant lives of his subject. His passion for photography has taken him around the world recording images of men, women and children in Russian Siberia, Mexico, Iraq, China, Palestine and Labrador. Nye, who practiced law for seven years before deciding in 1984 to pursue photography full time, has had over 25 one-person exhibits.

###